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WIND DOWN TO WIND UP 1945-1950

Howard G. Crowell, Jr.

Army War College
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28 February 1972

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BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL HOWARD G. CROWELL, JR.

INFANTRY

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USAWC RESEARCH PAPER

WIND DOWN TO WIND UP 1945-1950

A SPECIAL PROJECT REPORT

by

Lieutenant Colonel Howard G. Crowell, Jr.
Infantry "

US Army War College
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania
28 February 1972

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The world seemed not to profit from its WW II trauma and no sooner had the guns been silenced than a new kind of struggle for power and influence began. This was soon dubbed the "cold war" as the Soviet Union challenged the western powers in nearly every corner of the globe. The second half of the decade witnessed the occupation of Germany and Japan, civil war in Greece, a coup in Czechoslovakia, Soviet control of Eastern Europe, civil war in China, impasse in Korea, proliferation of nuclear weapons, massive U.S. aid to Europe, the Berlin blockade, establishment of NATO and finally, war in Korea.

While international turmoil threatened world peace, the United States Army experienced massive demobilization, troop riots, reorganization and unification, democratization pressures, equipment obsolescence, manpower shortages, roles and missions arguments, universal military training efforts, a dwindling and "softening" of the reserve establishment and a constant battle for funds.

By 1950 the U.S. Army was clearly unprepared for war; yet, to war it went, very suddenly, in Korea. That involvement served to highlight the difficulties that had plagued the Army during the late 1940's. "Wind Down to Wind Up" presents a capsulized recapitulation of those five years and underscores many of the facets of that experience applicable to the Modern Volunteer Army of the 1970's.

PREFACE

The events of the post World War II years signaled to the American people that not only had the holocaust of armed conflict not given birth to a new era of peace and understanding, but that for the first time in history this nation would play the leading role in shaping the international environment of the future. No longer would America be able to hide behind the wall of oceans which had protected her since birth. No longer would her people be blessed by time and space and the ability to turn inwardly to themselves while ignoring the world around them.

Yet they tried. Their "crusade" ended, at no small cost in labor and lives, they refocused their thoughts on home and a "return to normalcy." While their leaders wrestled with the problems of world order, occupation of defeated nations, economic recovery of victor and vanquished and political stability among nations large and small, America's citizens appeared slow to grasp the direct relationship between the well-being of the world and that of their nation.

Perhaps the most significant manifestation of this phenomenon was the fate of one of the chief instruments through which her leaders could influence the course of world events: America's armed forces. Public insistence on the rapid dismantling of this mighty machine did not go unnoticed by those who would soon challenge international democratic institutions for world domination. Combined with public reluctance to release America's economic strength toward world recovery, the disappearance of America's military might clearly inhibited those who had been charged with her international responsibilities.

America would soon compete, economically and militarily, in a troubled world challenged by the ravages of communism. But the cyclical behavior of her citizens toward international problems not only echoed the past but was to foretell the future. Anti-conscription arguments and "get out of Vietnam" are not unlike the sounds heard in 1946 to "bring the boys home" or in 1953 to "end the war in Korea."

The management of a nation's armed force following a successful war clearly affects the performance of that force at its next trial: the next war. While the world lived through five difficult years during its recovery from World War II, America's military institutions struggled for survival in anticipation of the next trial, one that at the time defied description. This effort focuses on the US Army as part of that struggle; what was done to it; what it did to itself; and the consequences of both as they became apparent when once again the country called upon its services.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	11
PREFACE	111
CHAPTER I. THE INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT 1945-1950	1
II. DEMOBILIZATION	13
III. REORGANIZATION, UNIFICATION, U.M.T. AND THE RESERVES	22
IV. THE ARMY ON THE EVE OF KOREA	34
V. THE FIRST MONTHS OF KOREA	42
VI. THE POSTWAR MESSAGE	51
BIBLIOGRAPHY	58

CHAPTER I

THE INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT 1945-1950

The struggle for survival on the part of the US military establishment and in particular the Army, took place in a world environment characterized as almost chaotic. For five years, men and nations struggled to recover from the holocaust that had engulfed the world for the previous five years. In doing so each grasped for assurance that future wars of aggression would not, or could not, again threaten world peace.

While western nations placed their faith in the cooperation of all governments through the United Nations, which formally opened in December 1946, the Soviet Union, distrustful of the west, chose a different course. While joining the UN and participating actively in its operations, Russia sought quickly to surround her homeland with states whose governments she controlled almost entirely. Eastern Europe fell first to her grasp immediately following Germany's surrender, simply because her armies occupied that territory.

She was not as quick to succeed in the south, but her desire to leave her troops in Iran brought the first major confrontation between the two superpowers of the world. Her efforts to bring Greece and Czechoslovakia under her wing would soon bring to light her international aims and reveal the ultimate challenge the United States would face.

Not only concerned about his west and south flanks, Mr. Stalin took immediate steps to consolidate his influence in the east. On 6 August 1945, eight days before the end of hostilities, he declared war on Japan and moved his troops into Manchuria. Russian troops entered Korea on 12 August 1945 to receive the surrender of Japanese units occupying the peninsula. Here, by agreement with the US, he stopped his armies at the 38th parallel and allowed the Americans, whose forces were no closer than Okinawa at the time, to occupy South Korea. The US entered Korea in September, almost a month following Russia's entry from the north, and thus was born a confrontation which was to erupt into conflict less than five short years from that date.

Russia's huge neighbor to the south was once again in internal turmoil. As soon as the war ended, The Nationalist Government of China, with US assistance, rushed its troops northward to gain as much control of the countryside as possible in an effort to preempt its takeover by the Communists. Seizing upon this opportunity, Soviet troops began dismantling Manchurian industry for transport to Russia, while at the same time turned captured Japanese arms over to the Chinese Communist armies of Mao Tse Tung. The battle lines for control of China had been drawn.

As the cold war began, the advantage was very much on the side of the Russians for three very specific reasons: the moral defeat suffered by the United States because of her use of the atomic bomb; the concessions granted to Stalin by Churchill and Roosevelt at Yalta (the Kurile islands, the southern half of Sakhalin,

privileges in Darien and Port Arthur, and recognition of her preeminent interests in Manchuria); and America's rush to disarm at the end of the war.¹

Thus in 1946 the United States "confronted a world to be dominated by three major factors, all quite foreign to our own experience and even to the experience of Western Europe."² Here, Walter Millis refers to the US emergence into real world power, the rise of the USSR to rival US power, and a new kind of warfare--the atomic bomb. Yet America's rush to disarm went headlong into the fall and winter of 1945 and 1946. The crescendo of public clamor to bring the boys home shattered the long-range plans of the War Department, the Truman administration, and the very stability of the Congress. By the spring of 1946 this country's armed might was already a shadow of its former self.

Amidst these significant events President Truman made a valiant effort to solve the China crisis by dispatching former Army Chief of Staff, General George Marshall, to China in January 1946. For over a year General Marshall wrestled with the problem while facing what were to become insurmountable odds. For a time, after having succeeded in arranging a meeting between Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek and Communist party chairman Mao Tse-tung, it appeared that the effort might succeed. But after long months of negotiating, increasing pressure around the world by Communist forces and corruption within the Kuomintang Government, it became apparent that coalition was not the solution. A disappointed Marshall departed in 1947 to become US Secretary of State leaving

China as unstable as he had found it. The world soon witnessed the inevitable takeover of China by the Communists.

Robert Leckie points out that China's going Communist probably could not have been prevented because of Stalin's duplicity at Yalta; America's rapid demobilization which stripped the Pacific Theater of three million Americans between July 1945 and March 1946; the dispatch of what remained of American troops to Japan rather than to China to help Chiang; Chiang's own ineptitude; his government's corruption and his country's inflation; the existence of high placed US officials who privately backed Mao; and last but hardly least, Mao's ability combined with Communist discipline.³

Perhaps Lloyd Gardner, author of Architects of Illusion, places the issue in its proper perspective in this passage from that work:

"The conqueror of Japan became the savior" wrote Anthony Kubek, one of Marshall's severest critics. "There was no one to save China." Stripped of its suggestions of betrayal in high places this "conservative" interpretation is surprisingly similar to claims that American good intentions were not supported by military power equal to the noble task. The answer to both interpretations is that the problem was not military.⁴

On the other hand, "While Marshall's approach did not envisage the use of military aid, he was plainly worried about the too rapid demobilization of American forces at the end of the war."⁵ He was to reiterate this theme as Secretary of State and it would be part of a chorus of US leaders expressing similar fears.

The postwar "shape" of Europe was decided at the Potsdam and Yalta Conferences. There was to be a joint sovereign over Germany. This came about in the form of four zones of occupation: American, British, French, and that of the Soviet Union. Each of these occupying powers was to bring national matters to an Allied Control Council. Berlin, Nazi Germany's former capitol which lay inside the Soviet zone, was also divided into four sectors.

The United States quickly disarmed and demilitarized that portion of the country within its zone. Americans participated as members of an International Military Tribunal which tried twenty-two Nazi leaders, twelve of whom were sentenced to death, seven imprisoned, and three acquitted. An office of Military Government supervised German civil affairs working increasingly through local agencies. A US constabulary was organized by the Army as the rapid demobilization cut away the strength of occupation units in Germany. The constabulary operated as a mobile police force.⁶

US occupation forces operated in similar fashion in Korea and in Japan. However, Japan was not stripped of her former government as was Germany, and General MacArthur was able to operate through an existing establishment, a significant factor in easing the burden of occupation. The fact that only the United States took part in the occupation of Japan precluded the problems of international coordination incumbent on allied forces in Europe. Nevertheless, as will be highlighted later, the disappearance of America's military machine had a significant impact upon these occupation forces.

Perhaps the most perplexing problem facing the United States and certainly the world in the postwar years was how to control atomic weapons. In groping for ways to exercise this control, the Atomic Energy Commission of the United Nations was established on 24 January 1946. Bernard Baruch, the US representative on the Commission, introduced a plan for the control of atomic energy. However, the plan envisaged the relinquishing of national sovereignty over nuclear power, which no state, particularly the Soviet Union, was willing to do. The Commission lapsed into inactivity and little came of its existence except to "announce" to the world that the question of nuclear power and national sovereignty would perplex the world's leaders for years to come.⁷

Indeed the United Nations itself was beginning to demonstrate its weakness in combating the very sovereignty of nations it had been designed to replace, at least in part. The establishment of the Security Council, with the veto granted the major powers, soon demonstrated its inability to cope with international problems when its members chose opposite sides. The steadily increasing frustrations of world federation and national power were given birth during the 1940s as postwar issues became major disputes between east and west.

Immediately following the surrender of Germany, when Soviet forces occupied much of Eastern Europe and Communist Yugoslavia's Marshall Tito consolidated his power, a Communist supported revolution erupted in Greece. Backed by British aid Greek nationalists

fought successfully to stave off this challenge. However, in early 1947, Britain announced that she could no longer support Greece against her Communist insurgents. This meant that Greece would surely fall unless America came to her assistance.

On March 12, 1947 President Truman asked Congress for \$400 million in aid to Greece and Turkey. His speech to the Congress in asking for these funds came later to be known as the "Truman Doctrine":

It [is] American policy to help democratic peoples work out a life free from coercion, but the US [can] not realize its objectives "unless we are willing to help free people to maintain their free institutions and their national integrity against aggressive movements that seek to impose upon them totalitarian regimes." This was simply recognizing Communist imperialism as undermining the foundations of international peace and hence the security of the United States.⁸

Influenced by this speech, as well as that of Sir Winston Churchill's at Fulton, Missouri early in 1946, in which the wartime British Prime Minister coined the famous "Iron Curtain" phrase, the Congress passed Mr. Truman's request on May 15, 1947. America had entered the fray against communism in an active role from which she has not, to this date, extricated herself.

By early 1947 it had become clear that a ravaged Europe was vulnerable to the advancing pressures of communism. Under the leadership of the new US Secretary of State George Marshall, sixteen nations drew up a four-year economic recovery program which would require some \$16 billion from the United States in the form of shipments of machinery, raw materials, and American industrial

experts to help Europe back on its feet. It was announced as the European Recovery Program on June 5, 1947, and later became known as the "Marshall Plan."

Congressional reaction to the plan was cold when President Truman first presented it in December 1947.⁹ Although the general public generally approved and Secretary of Defense Forrestal indicated that without such a plan the US would have to spend as much in a single year on defense, its price tag frightened Congress.

However, in February 1948, one of the oldest democracies in Europe fell to the Communists. The USSR engineered a coup d'etat in Czechoslovakia and placed a Communist government in Prague. This more than any single event stirred the American Congress, which appropriated the funds for the first year of the program on 3 April 1948.¹⁰ The Marshall Plan ended in 1951 having contributed some \$12 billion to Europe. Even then aid continued to Europe in other forms. The Soviet Union refused to participate in the European Recovery Program, but chose instead to form the Cominform as a counteraction to it.

In September of 1947 America launched into the first of her many mutual security treaties which had been made possible under the charter of the United Nations. On that date the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, known as the Rio Treaty, was signed.

By June of 1948, the total Army and Marine Corps ground troop strength was close to 630,000 men and the effective ground forces were down to some two and one-third divisions. The coup in Czechoslovakia had brought some attention to this and in that

same month Congress passed the Selective Service Act of 1948. This was to have lasted two years, but the Army netted only 100,000 men from it, and a total of 300,000 men were drafted prior to the Korean War.¹¹ The services were embroiled, by this time, in a series of bitter squabbles over roles and missions and the battle for funds. The reorganization of the US military establishment had met with only partial success, as will be described in subsequent discussion.

Then came the Soviet Union's next move which was to draw considerable attention to the state of America's armed forces and the lack of options available to us as a result of their plight. In June 1948, all ground access to Berlin was closed off by East Germany with the backing of the Soviet Union. The question of retaliation was resolved by President Truman with the advice of his military commander in Europe, General Lucius Clay. Without the military strength to force the blockade and not wanting to risk general war by doing so, the Berlin Airlift was organized. The airlift to support the city of Berlin was complemented by a counter blockade of East Germany by allied powers, and the movement to England of two B-29 squadrons which were capable of delivering nuclear weapons. This combined effort succeeded after almost one year, and in May 1949, the Communist blockade was lifted.¹²

The ultimate result of the blockade was the establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, created in August 1949 as an alliance between the United States, Canada, Denmark, Iceland, Italy, Norway, United Kingdom, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg. To this organization was contributed the largest

amount of military aid ever appropriated by Congress. This was done in conjunction with the Mutual Defense Assistance Program of October 1949.

Unlike the decades which followed, the late 40s did not see the use of federal troops to quell civil disorders. On the other hand National Guard troops were called into state service under the control of state governors on 16 separate occasions. Two of these were racial disturbances, six were industrial disputes, and one followed a natural disaster in South Amboy, New Jersey.

The one major involvement of US National Guard troops occurred in Puerto Rico between 30 October and 6 November 1950. The occasion was an independence movement perpetrated by a small but fanatical group of "Nationalists." An attempt was made on President Truman's life on 30 October 1950 and on that date all 5000 of Puerto Rico's National Guard soldiers were on active duty. Before it was over, a total of 31 persons had been killed.¹³

The momentous events of 1949 were "capped" in September of that year when the Soviet Union detonated its first atomic bomb. A stunned America, realizing suddenly that her nuclear monopoly had come to an end, reacted by authorizing the full speed development of the thermonuclear weapon.¹⁴ This brought to an end the debate, which had raged among the country's top scientists and political leaders, as to whether to pursue thermonuclear development. It also marked the real beginning of what has become known as the world's arms race.

The repeated efforts of both the United Nations as well as the United States to settle the Korean question came to a climax in June 1950 when on the 25th of that month, North Korea attacked South Korea, south of the 38th parallel, in an all-out effort to unify that country under Communism. The United States found itself once again at war, less than five short years from the last shot fired in World War II.

This then was the setting of the postwar years during which the United States Army disappeared and reemerged as a force with which to be reckoned. It was within this environment that the internal struggles of demobilization, organization, unification, proper roles and missions, training and remobilization were fought. The highlights of these efforts and their consequences are the subjects of the chapters which follow.

CHAPTER I

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CHAPTER II

DEMOBILIZATION

The sudden surrender of Japan in August 1945 seemed to most to be an unmixed blessing. The war was over, at last, and thousands of lives on both sides of the Pacific conflict would be saved by our not having to invade the main islands of Japan. But the blessing was indeed mixed to the demobilization planners of the War and Navy Departments, for their elaborate plans had foreseen the need to switch combat units to the Pacific theater from the Atlantic following VE day. Now it would not be necessary and they, as well as many others, would turn their attention to getting an even greater number of men home to their families than had been calculated earlier.

On 6 September 1944 the War Department had announced its point system, to be used following the defeat of Germany, to qualify servicemen for discharge. On 10 May 1945, a few days following victory in Europe, the War Department clarified the number of points that a veteran would receive: one point for each month of service since September 16, 1940; five points for the first and each additional award of the Service Cross, Legion of Merit, Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross, Soldiers Medal, Bronze Star Medal, Air Medal, Purple Heart or Bronze Service Star; twelve points for each dependent child under eighteen years old up to a limit of three children.¹

Following VJ Day, 14 August 1945, the War Department, faced with a drastically reduced manpower requirement, established

80 points as the critical score for return home and discharge. Demobilization proceeded on the basis that well over 1.2 million men would be needed in the postwar Army. This had been based on General MacArthur's and General Eisenhower's assessment of their needs overseas in occupied territories.

However, in September 1945, a month later, General MacArthur issued an unauthorized statement in which he announced the need of only 200,000 men for occupation duty instead of a previously calculated 500,000. President Truman was forced to agree with this assessment in spite of the War Department's new estimate of some 2.5 million men needed in the overall establishment. MacArthur's announcement created "not only embarrassment for the Administration but also additional material for political blasting."²

By early September 1945, Congress came under intense pressure from the American public to effect a speedy demobilization of the armed forces. On 17 September 1945 Clare Boothe Luce announced that every congressman was "under constant and terrific pressure from servicemen and their families" because members of the armed forces wanted to be discharged immediately.³ Many congressmen and administration officials were berated by pressure groups, industrialists and servicemen's families to "bring the boys home." "Bring Back Daddy" clubs were organized, and in December, Congress was deluged with baby shoes containing notes pleading: "Bring back my daddy."

Various congressmen jumped on the bandwagon to pressure the War Department and the Administration. One of these was Senator Edwin C. Johnson who sent the baby shoes he received to the

War Department suggesting it be a good Santa Claus and bring the fathers home. He later was to suggest that a cut in the defense budget might be the best way to accelerate demobilization.⁴

An important point, worthy of note at this juncture, is that the results of a public opinion poll, taken on 20 September 1945, indicated that some 56 percent of those sampled felt that the Army was, in fact, releasing men fast enough while 21 percent had no opinion. Another poll, taken on 22 November 1945, indicated that 50 percent of the population felt that the Army's system of releasing men was fair; 40 percent responded that changes were needed, and 10 percent had no opinion. "The apparent lack of a decisive public sentiment on the issue suggests that the pressure on Congress came from small but well organized groups."⁵

Nevertheless, in response to the clamor from Congress, General Marshall announced on 23 September 1945, that the critical point count would be reduced from 80 to 70 on 1 October 1945, and to 60 by 1 November. Following a temporary easing of pressure another fusillade of letters was received in November, and on 1 December, points were reduced to 55 and on 19 December, to 50.

The rapid reduction in the number of critical points (the number required for discharge) created a serious shortage in the availability of shipping suitable for troop transport. A major conversion program of combat ships to troop transports began in October and included 10 aircraft carriers, 26 cruisers, and six battleships. The carrier Enterprise alone carried 4,710 men home in December 1945.

Pressure on Congress increased steadily as Christmas 1945 approached. Writing campaigns from servicemen all over the world included such universal phrases as "no boats, no votes" and the National Maritime Union called a sympathetic one-day strike to dramatize the demand for more troop ships.

One million men were discharged from the Army in December 1945 while inductions fell below objectives. By this time, top military leaders including Generals Eisenhower, Spaatz, and Admiral King, were warning against the excessively rapid breakup of America's military strength. The War Department announced, on 4 January 1946, a slowdown in the rate of redeployments and discharges because of the lack of inductions and replacements to perform the remaining military functions abroad.

At this time, Secretary of War Robert Patterson chose to make an inspection trip of the Pacific. While at a press conference he admitted his unawareness of the fact that the accumulation of points for discharge had stopped as of VJ Day.⁶ This unfortunate remark coupled with the slowdown in bringing troops home touched off a series of riots by US servicemen around the world.

The first of these demonstrations occurred in Manila on 6 January 1946, when 20,000 soldiers stationed in Manila advanced on the Command Headquarters at City Hall and voiced their complaints to Lieutenant General William D. Styer, whose repeated explanations as to the reason for the redeployment slowdown were to no avail. Actually this had been preceded by a demonstration of some 4000 men who had marched on the 20th Replacement Depot Headquarters in Manila,

on Christmas day 1945, to protest the cancellation of the sailing of a troop ship.

These demonstrations touched off similar outbursts in Guam, Batangas, Yokohama, Sudia, and Korea, as well as in Europe to include Austria and the cities of Paris, London, and Frankfort. They also occurred in the United States but in most cases every one of them was orderly in spite of the need to employ the threat of bayonets and make twenty arrests in the case of the Frankfort outbreak.

The news of these demonstrations made headlines in the leading US newspapers, but their timing prevented major front page coverage. The CIO, on the 6th through 10th of January 1946, was threatening strikes against several major industries and the developments in these labor disputes gained the large print, particularly in the New York Times.⁷ Nevertheless, the coverage was thorough with pictures and detailed descriptions appearing for several days in the newspapers.

By this time the letter-writing campaigns were "in full swing" and were being supplemented by full page advertisements appearing in hometown newspapers. These had been bought and paid for by soldiers who took voluntary collections for this purpose.

R. Alton Lee in an article written for the Journal of American History in 1966 has suggested several basic causes that in retrospect appear to have been instrumental in stirring up the soldiers' displeasure with their circumstances. In summation he suggests that the troops did not realize the difficulty of converting enough ships to bring them home quickly; that they objected to what they saw as a

caste system in the military (a subject that was to have even greater consequences in subsequent years); that the War Department's Information and Education program was slow to shift from explaining "why we fight" to "why we must stay;" and that the life of the occupation soldier was an easy one which gave the men a great deal of time on their hands. Time magazine was to conclude that "by mob methods they could stir up a quick reaction from the US and its Congress" which was why many chose to join the demonstrations.⁸

Because the demonstrations were orderly in almost all cases they, in turn, were handled with restraint by Army authorities. Nevertheless, General Eisenhower, then Chief of Staff, went before Congress on 15 January 1945 to explain steps being taken to continue the demobilization process, while President Truman issued a statement as to why all who wanted a quick discharge could not be released. The War Department readjusted the point system so that by 30 April 1946, 45 points would qualify for discharge and by 30 June 40 points would be sufficient. General Eisenhower also told Congress that he had banned further demonstrations "on pain of court-martial."

The acceleration of the demobilization process exacerbated the already critical problem of manpower needed to perform occupation duties and simply maintain military equipment. Accessions had not kept up to required levels and steps taken to solve the manpower problems included the shortening of basic training from 17 weeks to 13 weeks and eventually to eight weeks. On 1 April 1946, families of officers and noncommissioned officers began joining servicemen in Europe and, on 1 May, in the Pacific. There were no more demonstrations

but the Army was now critically short of men throughout the world in light of the job facing it.

On 12 May 1945, the Army consisted of approximately 8,290,000 individuals; on 1 September 1945, its total strength was 8,020,000. By the end of 1945, it had been reduced to 4,228,936 and on 30 June 1946, it was down to 1,889,690 or a reduction of 6,133,614 in the nine-month period which followed VJ Day. At the end of World War II demobilization, on 30 June 1947, the total strength of the Army was only 989,664.⁹

The effect of this rapid demobilization can be measured in many terms. Its effect on national policy and security was that the Army's having dwindled to a state of near-impotence by mid 1947, after having been the most powerful military machine the world had seen, seriously impaired the security of the nation and clearly limited the flexibility of our foreign policy vis-a-vis the Soviet Union. Its effect on supply, maintenance, and storage of munitions was very similar indeed. Experts in this field, normally in rear areas during the fighting, were among those with the greatest number of points, having been in service the longest. They, too, were among the first to leave and the Army was left with not only an absence of sheer manpower to tackle this job but an extremely low level of expertise in the field. Thousands of items of equipment worth millions of dollars were left to rust in place. Waste became incredibly high and was matched only by the frustration of the Army's leadership left to deal with the problem. Its effect on the Army's unit structure was equally severe. The mass exodus of men from units overseas

caused a complete reshuffling of unit leadership. In some cases whole units disappeared to be replaced by inexperienced, untrained and untried fillers.¹⁰

Throughout the process, Congressional criticism was intense. Political pressures within the United States were particularly acute because of the upcoming Congressional election of November 1946. As early as August 1945 The Army Navy Journal printed a quote in which Senator Edwin C. Johnson was to have described the Army's demobilization policies as "blind, stupid, and criminal."¹¹ Several Congressmen during the period demanded Congressional inquiries into the Army's demobilization processes and as the soldiers themselves became more vociferous so did their elected representatives.

In summation, General Omar Bradley was to describe the effect of the demobilization through which he had lived and seen from a vantage point witnessed by few others:

Even before Hiroshima was cleared, the clamor for for instant discharge had disorganized our armies in the field. We chose to view the end of the war as the magic beginning of peace. We put our precious standards of private indulgence before an objective that had already cost us 350,000 lives.

In theaters throughout the world, hundreds of millions of dollars worth of equipment was abandoned to rot, to ruin, and to rust. An army that had smashed the best legions of Hitler was routed by the lure of a quick trip home.¹²

CHAPTER II

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CHAPTER III

REORGANIZATION, UNIFICATION, U.M.T. AND THE RESERVES

The advent of the nuclear weapon did not confront the military services as the only new event of the era. The war had changed the face of military conflict in a number of ways which would further challenge the general staff in the development of policy and doctrine. Psychological warfare, propaganda, policy aims, infiltration methods, espionage, terror, threat, economic warfare, and industrial base all represented a new scope to military planning and had suddenly "invaded" the sanctuaries of the general staffs.¹

The preponderant role of OPD diminished rapidly at the conclusion of hostilities, and in keeping with its new mission, the Army staff reorganized itself into five coequal General Staff divisions under DA Circular 138, dated 14 May 1946. These new divisions became the Personnel & Administration Division, consisting of 100 officers; the Intelligence Division of 250 officers; Organization and Training Division, 60 officers; Service, Supply and Procurement Division, 200 officers; and Plans and Operations Division (formerly OPD), 82 officers.

At the same time following the recommendations of both a board headed by Lieutenant General Alexander M. Patch and one headed by Lieutenant General William H. Simpson, Army Service Forces (ASF) was eliminated and Army Ground Forces (AGF) was restructured. Under AGF the old Corps areas gave way to six new Army areas. Thus the Army reconfigured itself to cope with its drastically changed role:

the switch from the conduct of war to the occupation of fallen territories, training, and internal administration.²

On a broader scale, however, the question of the optimum reorganization of US armed forces was one that had been on the minds of America's civilian and military leaders for a considerable period of time by the end of the war. Not only had the Pearl Harbor incident raised the issue early in the war, but the rapid rise of air power as a major element of modern warfare brought even greater attention to the issue.

Unification of the services was generally accepted as a necessary development in the creation of an efficient armed force in the nuclear age. The difficulty lay in finding agreement as to the shape or structure of the final organization.

The first hearings on unification of the Armed Forces occurred before the Select Committee of the House on Post War Military Policy during the period 24 April to 9 May 1944, well before the end of the fighting. At these hearings the Army witnesses expressed a favorable view toward unification, while Navy representatives remained non-committal and recommended further study on the subject.

Following the war, Secretary of War Patterson, General Marshall, and General Arnold favored the unification of the services into a Department of National Defense under a cabinet level officer. Most distinguished field commanders supported this, to include Generals MacArthur and Eisenhower.

A White House proposal on unification was submitted to Congress on 9 December 1945, in which President Truman asked for a Defense

organization under a single cabinet officer "in order to realize the following objectives: (1) integrated strategic plans and a unified military program and budget; (2) the economies achieved through unified control of supply and service functions; (3) coordination between the military and the rest of the government; (4) the strongest means for civilian control of the military; (5) unified training and scientific research; (6) unity of command in outlying bases; and (7) consistent and equitable personnel policies."³

The Navy objected to the plan submitted by the President primarily because of a fear that it might eventually entail its loss of the Marine Corps, and the questions it raised concerning command authority. Secretary of the Navy Forrestal had commissioned one Ferdinand Eberstadt, a long-time personal and business friend, to study the question. In his directive to Mr. Eberstadt of 19 June 1945, he asked for consideration of a series of related questions concerning the benefits to national security through unification of the War and Navy Departments.

In his report to the Secretary of the Navy, Eberstadt submitted that existing conditions did not warrant unification of the Army and Navy, and that it would not improve national security. He further reported that unification would not advance all desirable objectives of postwar military policy. In his stated view the "coordinate" form would be better.⁴

The controversy became bitter, and by the spring of 1946 President Truman had ordered a halt to public discussion of the issue, and had brought the Secretaries of the two services together

to iron out differences. During subsequent discussions Forrestal's position became stronger as Secretary of War Patterson gave up his insistence on a single chief of staff and yielded on the basic organization to be composed of three autonomous departments headed by a Secretary with cabinet rank.⁵

It took until January 1947 for the Services to develop agreement on the complexities of the issue, but on the 16th of that month they jointly recommended a unification plan. Legislative hearings followed and it was not until July 1947, that the National Security Act of 1947 was passed with an effective date of 17 September.

The Act itself consisted of three headings: Title I, Coordination for National Security; Title II, the National Military Establishment; and Title III, Miscellaneous Provisions. Title I described the organization of the National Security Council, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the National Securities Board. Title II created the War Council, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, a Munitions Board, and a Research and Development Board.⁵

It was soon realized by the man who had argued most for this type organization, Secretary Forrestal (who had been named the first Secretary of Defense), that the autonomy remaining in the service departments did not support the unity so long sought by the administration. The Hoover Commission, established in 1948 to evaluate the organization of the Executive Branch of the government, found in the National Military Establishment a lack of unified planning, continued disharmony, extravagance in military

budgets, and waste in expenditures. The Commission recommended that there be a greater centralization of authority in the executive, the establishment of clear lines of command and accountability, and direct supervision of operations.⁷

On 5 March 1949 President Truman recommended an amendment to the National Security Act that the National Military Establishment be converted to one Executive Department to be known as the Department of Defense, and that the Secretary of Defense be provided the appropriate responsibility and authority. This was accomplished by the passage of Public Law 216 by the 81st Congress on 10 August 1949. Under this amendment the Departments of Army, Navy, and Air Force were made military departments instead of executive branches of the government.

Throughout the process of unification of the services the basic internal structure of the Army as it had been revised in 1946 was not significantly affected. Congress began appropriating funds to the Department of the Army as a whole rather than to each of the technical services, as previously had been the case, and the office of the Comptroller was established to unify Army fiscal activities. The Secretary of the Army was to determine the number and relative strengths of Arms and Services while Armor, Artillery, and Infantry were given statutory recognition. This then, was the structure of the Army that faced Korea in 1950.⁸

The unification process did not take place in a vacuum, unencumbered by external pressures, for it was during this period in our military history that some of the country's greatest

intramilitary squabbles occurred. History records the era as having been dominated by the question of "roles and missions." The advent of nuclear weapons, the "emancipation" of air power, the overlaps of responsibilities, and the redundancies inherent in the operation of a large and sophisticated military machine presented the country's military/civilian leadership with a major dilemma.

The Navy's primary concern was the maintenance of its own air arm as well as its control of the Marine Corps. The Air Force bristled at the thought of a rival air arm (the Navy's) while it fought for complete delivery propensity of the atomic bomb. The Marine Corps "looked over its shoulder" at an Army which abhorred the thought of a rival land force, while the development of missiles occupied the talents and funds of all services thus aggravating the overlapping of effort.

Secretary Forrestal, Secretary of Defense since September 1947, gathered the military chiefs of each service at Key West, Florida, between 11 and 14 March 1948 to attempt to settle some of these questions away from the political arena of the Washington area. Attending were Admiral Leahy, Chairman, JCS, General Bradley, CofS Army, Admiral Denfield, CNO, and General Spaatz, CofS, Air Force. The conference resulted in several agreements which were to help settle the issue, although by no means was it to disappear from view, nor has it since. The major agreements were: that the Marine Corps was limited to four divisions and was not to develop into another land Army; the Navy was not to develop a separate strategic Air Force; and the Air Force would recognize the right and need of

the Navy to participate in an all-out air campaign. The Army was given the Administration's blessing on the pursuit of Universal Military Training for the country as a whole, the proponent for which was to have been the Army.⁹

At a subsequent conference in August 1948 at the Naval War College in Newport, R.I., the Air Force was given temporary operational control of the atomic bomb. At this point the roles and missions fight settled into an "uneasy peace" as the country moved even closer to its forthcoming conflict in Asia.

Perhaps the Army's greatest hope, frustration, and disappointment of this period were all manifested in its effort to achieve for the country, Universal Military Training, a subject which for more than eight years was to involve the efforts of the Army's manpower planners. For years prior to World War II the question as to the best method of obtaining soldiers to meet the challenges of war had been debated not only in the US but in Europe as well. The two principal contending theories were a large standing regular army ready to fight at the outset of war versus a small regular army capable of expansion to wartime needs. World War II had demonstrated the need and value of the citizen soldier and the obvious impossibility of maintaining a permanent structure large enough to satisfy our wartime requirements.

John McAuley Palmer, who favored the use of citizen soldiers and was a noted proponent of this theory, was recalled to active duty by General Marshall at the age of 71, in 1941. Commissioned by the Chief of Staff to develop the Army's future manpower acquisition policies, Palmer prepared Circular 347 published on 24 August 1944

which was to be the basis of the Army's manpower recommendations throughout the 1940's.¹⁰

Marshall and Palmer favored Universal Military Training. Both Marshall and Secretary of War Stimson, in 1944, believed that there was widespread popular support for it and that it would be politically acceptable with the President's support.¹¹ On 5 July 1945 the Post War Military Policy Committee of the House of Representatives endorsed the broad principle of Universal Military Training and recommended the adoption of legislation to put such a program into effect.

On 23 October 1945 President Truman, in an address to a joint session of Congress, outlined a one-year program for all males, 18 years old or upon graduation from high school, whether physically qualified for combat or not. These young men were to become members of a general reserve for six years after which they would be moved into a "secondary reserve."¹² Public reaction to the proposal proved to be mixed and Congress was not disposed to pass such a controversial measure at that juncture. As a consequence, no action was taken on the subject in 1945.

In the meantime, the Selective Service law was extended by Congress on 25 June 1946 to be effective until 31 March 1947. During 1946 and 1947 several plans for the development of a Universal Military Training program were proposed by the War Department and the White House. One of these was the result of the appointment of Karl T. Compton, President of M.I.T., to head a Presidential Commission on Universal Military Training. This Commission proposed a six-month training program to be under the general charge of a civil commission.

Of this, Mr. Truman said: "The military phase was incidental to what I had in mind." The President went on to claim that his main interest was in the improvement of youth ". . . to develop skills that could be used in civilian life, to raise the physical standards of the nation's manpower, to lower the illiteracy rate, to develop citizenship responsibilities, and to foster the moral and spiritual welfare of our young people."¹³

Russell Wrigley in his History of the United States Army writes, with regard to the proposal and Mr. Truman's comments:

However, such proclaimed objectives all too obviously seemed hedges against anticipated objections to peacetime military conscription. The use of the nuclear weapon made people wonder whether we would ever need mass armies again. Then Korea came, and Truman shelved UMT, and the Army was busy with Korea (which did not demand mass armies either). Congress passed the UMT Act (in June, 1951) which indorsed UMT in principle, but there was no prospect of its ever becoming implemented and nothing more has been done since.¹⁴

Walter Millis wrote of UMT that, in retrospect, the European model of Universal Military Training did not rely on a small regular force as was desired in the United States, but a large one to train reserves to expand the Army even larger in war. "Universal Military Training always had an air of unreality about it that proved fatal to its acceptance."¹⁵ And Mr. David Lawrence in US News & World Report was to write: "What defeated the UMT bill was the decision to set up a plan that parallels but does not really substitute for or supplement the Selective Service operation."¹⁶

The fate of UMT left the Army continually dependent on the draft to fill its ranks when its recruiting efforts failed to meet selected quotas. It further left the Army dependent on the Reserve and National Guard establishments which themselves had lapsed into a posture of virtual impotency after some five years of postwar relative inactivity.

There had been some attention given, by the War Department, to dissolving the National Guard, but by war's end it had been decided to retain a structure similar to that of the thirties. The War Department offered all officers below colonel a terminal grade one above that held if they would join the National Guard following discharge from World War II service. By 1950, the National Guard consisted of 324,761 members of ground forces serving in some 4,597 units.¹⁷

Secretary of Defense Forrestal appointed a committee on Civilian Components headed by Assistant Secretary of the Army Gordon Gray. The Gray Board report was dated 30 June 1948 and contained the following main points:

1. Interservice unity must be maintained.
2. All services must have a reserve force.
3. Everything about the Reserves should be integrated with the regular forces.
4. The structure of the Reserves should be simplified and made common to the three services.
5. Their mission should be to provide trained units and officers to meet emergencies.

6. That National Guard and Reserve Officer Corps units were not capable of effective participation on M day (at time of report).

7. Members of the Reserves should be trained and organized into units in the same manner as proposed for the Regular Army.

8. Specialist personnel should be organized into units designed to use their specialty.

The Board further recommended the establishment of a Joint Inter-Service Committee to report on Reserve forces' policies and procedures of common interest to all Services.¹⁸ This eventually became the Reserve Forces Policy Board in 1953. By 1950 the Reserve establishment consisted of 68,785 officers and 117,756 men in 10,629 activated units of the organized Reserve. An additional 390,961 officers and men were on the rolls but not in active training units.¹⁹

Thus, during a period of intense international diplomatic maneuvering, while the country's citizenry turned inward and "slept well" under the "umbrella" of the atomic bomb, the US Army struggled to identify its role, structure itself to meet its future challenge and sustain itself within a severely constrained budget. The results of its efforts and ultimate posture in 1950 bear explanation and further description. (Chapter IV)

CHAPTER III

FOOTNOTES

1. Millis, p. 305.
2. Weigley, pp. 487-488.
3. Bernardo and Bacon, pp. 453-454.
4. Ferdinand Eberstadt: Unification of War and Navy Departments and Post War Organization for National Security. A Report to Hon. James Forrestall (1945).
5. Bernardo and Bacon, pp. 456-457.
6. Ibid., pp. 458.
7. Herbert Hoover: The National Security Organization. A Report to the Congress by the Commission of the Executive Branch of the Government, February 1949 (1949).
8. Weigley, p. 496.
9. Bernardo and Bacon, pp. 472-473.
10. Weigley, p. 497.
11. New York Times (January 15, 1944).
12. New York Times (October 24, 1945).
13. Weigley, p. 499.
14. Ibid.
15. Millis, p. 308.
16. David Lawrence, US News & World Report (March 14, 1952).
17. Weigley, p. 487.
18. Department of Defense, Report of Committee on Civilian Components (1948), pp. 9-46.
19. Weigley, p. 487.

CHAPTER IV

THE ARMY ON THE EVE OF KOREA

Willing and able in combat, the US soldier echoed his civilian relatives by becoming restless and impatient when hostilities ended. Even beyond this, however, throughout the war and certainly following it, he was to continually express his egalitarian views so deeply rooted in his heritage. During and after the war, cynicism remained strong. The soldier had no love for war or military institutions and hated the "military caste system." The "Willie and Joe" cartoon drawn by William L. (Bill) Mauldin, which prototyped the infantryman, reflected this attitude.¹

Hanson Baldwin wrote in March of 1946,

Most of the bitterness is directed against the Army. . . . It takes on as many forms as there are men who utter it, but there is one almost universal denominator--resentment against what the men describe as the "officer-caste" system in the services, against the arbitrary and tyrannical acts of military superiors, against excessive officer privilege and abuse of privileges.²

The rumblings of dissatisfaction grew increasingly strong throughout 1945 and were crowned by the "riots" of protest in January 1946. On 18 March 1946 Robert Patterson signed a memorandum which created the Secretary of War's Board on Officer-Enlisted Man Relationships. Its chairman was to be Lieutenant General James H. "Jimmy" Doolittle who had led the first air raid over Tokyo and later commanded the 8th Air Force.

The famous "Doolittle Board," which was in session less than three months, was to have a major impact on the Army. The Board personally interviewed 42 representative witnesses and received over 1000 letters from people interested in the problem. It was unanimous in its conclusions and recommendations and published its final report on 27 May 1946. Extracts of some of these conclusions and recommendations reveal the tenor of the Army following the war and set the stage on which it was to function internally over the next four years.

The Board concluded (in part) that:

1. The rapid expansion of the Army (during World War II) created an unprecedented personnel problem. . . .
2. . . . the present reaction against the military organization is not unique
3. . . . much of the criticism could be expected.
4. Americans look with disfavor upon any system which grants unearned privileges to a particular class of individuals
5. There were irregularities, injustices in handling of enlisted personnel
6. The causes of poor relationships between commissioned and enlisted personnel are traceable to two main factors:
 - a. Undeniably poor leadership on the part of a small percentage (of leaders)
 - b. A system that permits and encourages a wide official and social gap between commissioned and enlisted personnel.
7. . . . poor leadership resulted from the thrusting into positions of authority men who were inherently unqualified or were inadequately trained as leaders

8. The peace time Army did not adequately prepare officers for the war-time job of handling civilian soldiers; . . .

9. It is extremely difficult under existing procedures to get rid of incompetents and undesirable among the officer group.

10. There is a need for a new philosophy in the military order, a policy of treatment of men . . .

11. . . . One of the most lacking yet important phases of the military structure is an alert and effective internal policing service and an agency providing a practical means of redress.

In formulating their recommendations the Board made a special point of stipulating the following objectives (note the striking similarity between these of 25 years ago and those of the Modern Volunteer Army of the 70s):

1. There must be assurance that we, as a nation, have a modern, economical, efficient and effective military establishment which can, if needed, win battles and a war.

2. Maintenance of control and discipline, which are essential to the success of any military organization.

3. Maintenance of morale which must be of the highest order and under continual scrutiny.

4. That the people returning from combat duty or service in military establishment, return in the best possible physical, mental, moral, and spiritual condition.

5. That conditions be such as to create in the mind of the soldier a favorable impression of the military service and the government.

6. Improvement of the character, the knowledge, and the competency of those who have been and those who are in the service or plan to become members of the Army.

7. Assurance of ready availability of all elements of a military establishment in case of an emergency.

8. Assurance of ready expansion of a citizens' Army in case of a national emergency.⁴

The Board's specific recommendations addressed these issues directly. They were controversial and many senior officers objected seriously to what was termed the "softening of the Army," and a complete removal of necessary discipline among its members. The recommendations included: the ability of enlisted men to accumulate leave time on their records (as could officers); allowing enlisted men "to pursue normal social patterns comparable to our democratic way of life"; that the terms "officers and their ladies" vs. "enlisted men and their wives" be eliminated; that there be equality of treatment in the administration of military justice; that the hand salute be abolished off military installations; that the system of awards and decorations be equitable; that a system for registering complaints be improved; that anything forbidding social association of soldiers with similar likes and tastes because of military rank be abolished; that the terms and concepts, "enlisted man" and "officer" be eliminated and that all military personnel be referred to as "soldiers"; and many others.⁵

The Army, while facing up to these questions as well as those previously described, soon became very much a postwar Army, shaped less by military doctrine needed in a future war than by the past World War of whose massive armies it was a remnant. Development of non-atomic weapons lagged, procurement was slow and its weaponry

remained that of World War II, most of which had been developed during the 20s and 30s (M-1 rifle, BAR, .30 and .50 caliber machine gun, 60 and 81 mm mortars, 4.2 inch mortars, 75 mm recoilless rifles and 105 mm howitzers). Although there had been some Pershing tanks acquired most of the inventory consisted of Sheermans, and with World War II weapons the Army practiced World War II tactics.⁶

The tendency was to consider the American nuclear monopoly as the primary deterrent to direct Soviet military action and to think only in terms of total war. Obviously the possibility of lesser conflicts in which the bomb would be neither politically nor militarily relevant was almost completely disregarded.⁷

Not unrelated to the Doolittle Board, although a completely separate effort, the establishment of a new Uniform Code of Military Justice occurred on 5 May 1950. This code eased the severities of military discipline and as in the case of the Board's recommendations, many professional officers were to blame the new code for the shortcomings of the soldiers of the '50s. Certainly one of the motivators underlying the establishment of the new code was to make the military services more attractive and thus create more enlistments.

If morale was a problem among lower ranking members of the Army, the senior leadership faced an agonizing environment vis-a-vis the other services. The Navy had its own gunnery ships, its own aviation, its own army (the Marines) "and even its own peculiar kind of Army aviation in the Marine air squadrons."⁸ The Air Force had control of the major weapon of the day, the atomic bomb, and was arguing strongly for control of air to air, ground to air, and long-range ground to ground missiles. "The Army on the other hand while possessing a

small naval transport and landing equipage had no aviation of its own at all."⁹

In early 1948 Secretary Forrestal was to reflect upon the events occurring in a National Security Council Meeting, where speaking of Secretary of State Marshall, he wrote: "He said that the trouble was that we are playing with fire while we have nothing with which to put it out."¹⁰ Of course, Marshall referred at the time to the contention in Korea as well as North China, Italy's struggle with communism, one quarter of France's voters already Communists, Western Europe prostrate, Greece in civil war, and turbulence in Palestine. An ineffective Army, even backed up by an Air Force delivered atomic bomb, was hardly a pillar of bargaining power for the Secretary of State.

By 1950 the Army had ten divisions, a division-sized European constabulary, and nine separate regimental combat teams. Each of the divisions had been skeletonized except for the First Division in Germany. Regiments had only two battalions. Artillery battalions had only two batteries. Divisions generally lacked their organic armor while infantry battalions were short one rifle company. Ammunition reserves were limited and the divisions in Japan had a total of 45 days supply. Behind this structure were supporting units actually weaker than the divisions themselves.¹¹

Most of the divisions were involved in occupation duty in Germany and Japan, and the administrative chores of occupation interfered with training and conditioning programs. Peacetime training had become much less rigorous than that performed during the war. The principal difference was that the training lacked combat simulation

which would have posed changes distasteful to public opinion. In the case of those stationed in Japan there just simply wasn't room or ground on which to train. Again, no one, enlistees, draftees, officers, nor civilians, expected the Army to serve as a combat organization soon, and the state of weapons, organization and more importantly the state of mind of all reflected this view.¹²

The election of 1948 brought to the Defense Department Mr. Louis Johnson, an ambitious man who thought that what was needed was economy in the government, especially in the Defense Department. As the Secretary of Defense, Johnson thought that his own ambitions, as well as those of his President, would be best served by embarking on a major program of economy. Like so many others of that day, he believed that our air-nuclear superiority would make such a policy safe. He proceeded to cut military expenditures below the \$15 billion that Truman had set, and while the Army "sat on the sidelines" during the "revolt of the admirals," the Navy's spectacular protest over Mr. Johnson's cancellation of its supercarrier, the Army again suffered a strength reduction under his policies.¹³

In 1950 Mr. Truman's defense budget was \$13.5 billion. Congress had cut the Army from 677,000 to 630,000 men and by June 1950, at the outbreak of Korea, its actual strength was 591,487 active duty members.

CHAPTER IV

FOOTNOTES

1. OCMH Study "Anti-War and Anti-Military Activities in the United States 1846-1954," Robert W. Coakley, Paul J. Scheips, Emma J. Portuondo (11 March 1970).
2. Hanson Baldwin, New York Times Magazine (31 March 1946).
3. Report of the Secretary of War's Bond on Officer-Englisted Man Relationships (May 1946).
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Weigley, p. 502.
7. Matloff, p. 540.
8. Millis, p. 311.
9. Ibid.
10. James Forrestal, "The Forrestal Diaries," New York Viking (1951), p. 373.
11. Weigley, p. 503.
12. Ibid., pp. 503-504.
13. Ibid., p. 502.

CHAPTER V

THE FIRST MONTHS OF KOREA

The United States had referred the matter of Korea to the United Nations as early as October 1947 after having attempted to settle the issue bilaterally with the Soviet Union and failed. Furthermore, US military officials had expressed the view that we had no strategic interest in leaving US troops there.

The UN called for elections throughout Korea, to be conducted in November 1947, under the observation of a UN Temporary Commission on Korea. However, the USSR denied permission for the UN to enter Korea north of the 38th parallel and thus thwarted the election effort. Nevertheless, elections were held in the south while the USSR established a puppet regime, the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea, in the north.

In the south, the Republic of Korea was inaugurated on 15 August 1948, and the US military government ended on that date. A UN resolution of November 1947 had called for the withdrawal of all occupying forces, 90 days after the establishment of a Korean government, but the Soviet Union would not remove its troops. Although the Russians did claim they had gotten out by 25 December 1948, the North Koreans would not allow UN representatives to check.

Nevertheless, it was decided in March 1949 that complete withdrawal of US forces would be militarily and politically desirable and by 29 June of that year, the US removed all but 500 officers and men of the Korean Military Assistance Advisory Group (KMAAG).

The UN Commission on Korea was to remain, by a resolution of October 1949, and report on any possible military activity.

By March 1949 the Republic of Korea (South) had 114,000 security forces (65,000 Army, 4,000 Coast Guard and 45,000 police). The Army was fully equipped at a level of 50,000 with US Infantry type weapons. By June 1950 the US had delivered \$57 million worth of military equipment plus \$85 million worth of supplies. The Mutual Defense Act of 1949 became law on 6 October of that year, and under the act \$10.2 million in further aid was made available for South Korea.

By the latter part of the decade of the '40s, South Korea was experiencing stepped up infiltration and Communist attacks along the 38th parallel. On 1 June 1949, North Korean forces invaded South Korea on the Ongjin Peninsula, following a series of minor border incidents. After some severe fighting the border was restored in July. On 4 August the North Koreans launched another large-scale attack on the Ongjin Peninsula and again were repulsed after heavy fighting. In September heavy guerrilla warfare began and the country was well on its way to open warfare.¹

On the eve of the major North Korean invasion, the Foreign Economic Assistance Act of 1950 allocated \$100 million for economic assistance to Korea (5 June 1950). However, the military aid to Korea contained a conspicuous absence of heavy equipment. The new president of South Korea, Syngman Rhee, was hardly less high handed than his neighbors, the Communists to the north, and the American Congress was loath to arm him. Military support therefore carefully

excluded tanks, big guns, combat aircraft and even large stocks of ammunition.

On 12 January 1950, Secretary of State Dean Acheson declared that the American line of defense in the Pacific "runs along the Aleutians to Japan and then goes to the Ryukyus [and] from the Ryukyus to the Philippine Islands."² In May Senator Tom Connally declared that Russia could seize Korea without American intervention because the peninsula was "not very greatly important."³

The attack came on Sunday, 25 June 1950, to the astonishment of the American government and its people. President Truman took the issue immediately to the United Nations, while ordering General Douglas MacArthur to determine the severity of the situation. In the meantime the North Korean attack was a lightning stroke, designed to reach the sea at Pusan before there could be a sufficient reaction by any power to stop them. Behind Russian T34 tanks, their units poured down the western corridor toward Seoul pushing aside weak South Korean resistance which did not include anything to stop the tanks.

On 27 June, the day before Seoul fell, General MacArthur told President Truman that the ROK Army, and thus its resistance, was about to collapse. At this point Truman authorized him to use American air and naval forces. "It was significant that Truman did not commit American ground forces, and this was because he shared the widespread belief that air and sea power were sufficient to retrieve the situation."⁴

Although it is not known exactly why it happened, the Soviet Union chose this period in the history of the UN to boycott the Security Council and thus the US was successful in obtaining a resolution that pitted the UN against the Communist forces fighting in Korea. Fifteen nations eventually joined the US in the fighting in Korea, while the UN invited the United States to set up a UN command and name its commander.

Notwithstanding the material, moral, and "legal" support eventually received by its allies, it was left to the United States to stem the tide of invasion before the North Koreans reached Pusan and the "foothold" was lost. General MacArthur had at his immediate disposal 83,000 ground troops: four understrength divisions armed with World War II weapons. Yet he moved with "lightning speed" to insert US forces into the fray.

First on the scene was Task Force Smith, a 540 man battalion of the 24th Division equipped with rifles, machine guns, mortars, four 105 mm howitzers, 2.3 inch "bazookas," and 75 mm recoilless rifles. The 24th Division was commanded by Major General William Dean, who ordered Lieutenant Colonel Charles "Brad" Smith to meet the North Koreans as far north of Pusan as possible and hold them as long as possible, until reinforcements arrived to assist in the effort. Smith picked a well disposed position at Osan where he met the onslaught of 10,000 enemy troops supported by tanks. Armed with nothing to stop the T-34 tank, Smith's position was quickly overrun, and the unit dispersed to find its way to the rear in small groups as best it could.

The first major US effort of the war was General Dean's attempt to hold Taejon where his 24th Division, now closed in Korea from its occupation duty in Japan, was disposed. General Walton Walker, General MacArthur's field commander, had asked General Dean for two days delay at Taejon beginning on the 19th of July. The Division had now been equipped with 3.5 inch rocket launchers capable of destroying the T-34 and he was confident of his ability to hold. But the North Korean attack was furious; many American units broke or withdrew without orders, as had been happening since their insertion, and the city defenses were flanked. The enemy had broken through, taken the city, and were pushing south when General Dean, who had remained near the front in the thick of the fighting to inspire his troops, became separated from his unit and eventually fell captive to the North Koreans.

Time and again the 24th Division men and officers retreated against orders, threw away their rifles and helmets, abandoned their equipment, refused to fight, left their wounded behind or sat down to await capture.⁵

A basic fact is that the occupation divisions were not trained, equipped or ready for battle. The great majority of the enlisted men were young and not really interested in being soldiers. The recruiting posters that had induced most of these men to enter the Army mentioned all conceivable advantages and promised many good things but never suggested that the principal business of an Army is to fight.⁶

Nevertheless, the efforts of the 24th as well as the 1st Cavalry Division and the 25th Infantry Division were sufficient to stem the tide, halt the North Koreans long enough for fresh US troops to secure the defenses around Pusan, and enable General MacArthur to

launch his famous flanking attack at Inchon in September 1950. It was not accomplished without great difficulty, however, and the American soldier in Korea was to pay the price of his country's neglect over the previous five years. The victory at Inchon and the breakout at the Naktong (Pusan) perimeter were victories of materiel and numbers. "The American Army even yet had not developed a toughness and cohesion equal to its foes."

It is not surprising that the young American soldier wondered why he was in Korea or why he had been asked to lay down his life for a cause that seemed far removed from any vital interest of his country. For the first time in history America had entered a war without the fanfare and massive public support that once made instant heroes of the men in uniform who marched off to war. Korea acquired little public support, and President Truman refused to allow administration officials to refer to it as a "war" at all, but some sort of police action or "Korean conflict" lest it become politically intolerable.

In spite of these circumstances, events in Korea soon demonstrated to those involved that the "conflict" would require major effort if success was to be achieved. Men and munitions were needed quickly; there was not time to start from "scratch." Yet the United States had no plans for partial mobilization of reserves to meet limited war requirements and Korea did not represent all-out war.

At the outset General MacArthur had asked for additional units and individuals to fill his understrength divisions. These were supplied by the general reserve in the United States which in turn

became dangerously depleted as a result. Furthermore, because the Administration was worried about what the Soviet Union might do in Europe, because of our intervention in Korea, it had been decided to increase US Army strength there from one to six divisions.

After several successive increases in the manpower ceiling during the summer of 1950, Congress removed the ceiling entirely on 3 August 1950 thereby giving the Secretary of Defense authority to determine manpower needs. By 17 April 1951, after Chinese intervention in Korea, the ceiling was raised to 1,552,000 men for the Army.

The Army was built to this strength through four main methods:

a. Stepped up recruiting for the Regular Army and extension of all existing terms of enlistment by twelve months.

b. Use of Selective Service, Congress extending it for one year on 9 July 1950.

c. Ordering into service of individuals and units of the Organized Reserves.

d. Ordering into Federal Service of units of the Army National Guard. Both these steps (c and d) were authorized by Congress on 30 June 1950. The term of service in both cases was to be 21 months.⁸

Ultimately the Army mobilized some 2,834,000 men and maintained a total of 20 divisions. Eight Army and one Marine division were committed to Korea. Citizen soldiers had to be called upon because it was immediately obvious that the regulars could not handle even limited war by themselves. Mobilization problems became increasingly difficult to the point of being critical especially after November 1950 after the Chinese entered the war.

Much of the strain on those responsible for mobilization came from an increasingly adverse public opinion toward the war. Almost as a direct reaction to this the Army, in an effort to maintain high morale, made an effort to approximate the American standard of living even in the Korean mountains. The logistics tail became immense but it provided warm clothing, Thanksgiving turkey, cokes, cigarettes, and comfort items to the troops. This often caused fighting units to be understrength while additional manpower was used to support the fighters.⁹

The Army reemerged as an obviously essential part of the US armed forces and the nuclear weapon no longer held it in eclipse, as had been the case in the late 40s. Korea highlighted the creeping softness that had infected the Army and for three years strained its leadership while it tried to fight an unpopular war. Korea not only highlighted the mistakes of the 40s, but in many respects was to portend the events of the 60s. The Army's plight in Vietnam was not unlike that of Korea, and the lessons of the first "limited war" of this century as well as those of the second may well contain valuable insights for the future.

CHAPTER V

FOOTNOTES

1. "The Conflict in Korea, Events Prior to the Attack on June 25, 1950," Department of State (1951).
2. Robert Leckie, Conflict: The History of the Korean War (1962), p. 37.
3. Ibid.
4. Leckie, Wars of America, p. 334.
5. Ibid.
6. Roy E. Appleman, US Army in the Korean War, South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu (1961), p. 180.
7. Weigley, p. 520.
8. Robert W. Coakley, "Highlights of Mobilization, Korean War," Department of the Army (10 March 1959).
9. Weigley, p. 511.

CHAPTER VI

THE POSTWAR MESSAGE

The lessons of the postwar 40s have been studied by many of varying professions. Some lessons were learned well, others forgotten to be learned again by later generations. Most have been touched upon here directly or indirectly by the events related in previous chapters. Some of these are noted with interest but are of little importance beyond the amusement they offer, a frequent gift of history. Others are vital and need to be indelibly impressed on those who will someday order or lead men to battle.

The views of students who have examined the era are often significant and worth reviewing again, specifically in light of those events which have since occurred. What follows will be a brief reexamination of some of those views ranging over a broad spectrum of dates, places and events.

The demobilization process which occurred in 1945 and 1946 was an incredible chapter in the history of our nation's armed forces, but it was not new nor was it something that could not have been predicted. It had happened before, some twenty-five years earlier, and even then it was in the tradition of our nation's early origins. But it may well have affected the political shape of the world for ". . . the rapid demobilization of the American armed forces and the abrupt discontinuance of Lend-Lease marked the end of the principal sources of United States bargaining power. . . ."1 The lesson seems clear and certainly relevant to today's world of the 70s.

The conduct of American soldiers following the war and during the redeployment process stunned the nation, and although not publicized as it would have been today, did raise serious questions about the state of discipline in the Army. Most soon forgot the incidents after the furor subsided, following General Eisenhower's ban "on pain of courts-martial." But R. Alton Lee wrote in retrospect:

In proper perspective, these Army "mutinies" in 1946 were more serious than their brief duration indicates. They weakened the morale of overseas troops and heightened the desire of the American public to demobilize the Armed Forces rapidly at a time when the United States needed even greater strength and unity of purpose in order to oppose the growing might of the Soviet union.²

The attitude that prevailed with regard to the Army in the late 40s has been vividly described by Russell Weigley in his History of the United States Army. He has indicated in that work that Reorganization and Universal Military Training would have developed as they did with or without the existence of Russia. The Army was looked upon, because of the air-atomic monopoly, as irrelevant. No one could conceive of a need for a land war. Anti-communism was not an Army matter unless it came to an all-out attack by Russia, unlikely as it was, and then we would use our air-nuclear weapons against them.³

Militarism was anathema to the average American citizen and he took advantage of his postwar circumstances to express his feelings on the subject. The fighting ended and the mission accomplished, the citizen soldier was given time to brood over his regimented circumstances. The Army was forced to look at itself and found,

indeed, a corruption among some of its members in the exercise of officer/enlisted relationships. The Doolittle Board articulated the problem and further highlighted a potential weakness in the regular officer training system often unnoticed and which may even prevail today.

The peace-time Army did not adequately prepare officers for the war-time job of handling civilian soldiers; it did not offer a code of officer-enlisted man conduct flexible enough for application to an Army where the bulk of the men in all ranks were civilian.⁴

As we move now in the 70s to an all volunteer force we would do well to remember past consequences of expansion and the essentiality of maintaining a disciplined force of civilian soldiers.

Korea was to teach us a great deal about our preparedness, our concepts of future wars, and our deterrent capacity of the day. Perhaps one of the greatest lessons of the Korean war, in this regard, was that airpower alone is incapable of combatting the onslaught of an enemy ground force. One may argue that there was never a serious opinion to that effect, but the extent to which airpower alone is not sufficient cannot be overemphasized. Certainly Korea proved the point. Vietnam has put it in "concrete."

The deterioration of American military skills during the postwar years of the 40s gave rise to serious concern when Korea rudely interrupted our "peacetime nap." On the one hand Walter Millis writes: "Inchon was successful in part because enough World War II people were left to do the complicated planning and there were enough World War II landing craft available."⁵ One can speculate about what

might have occurred if the war had taken longer to erupt and those two ingredients had not been available to General MacArthur.

On the other hand, Russell Weigley writes: "Chinese troop concentrations south of the Yalu in November 1950 would almost certainly not have gone undetected by Army reconnaissance efforts of 1944-45. This was another indication of the lapse of American military skills during the postwar years."⁶ It is clear that the Army skills developed over World War II had to some degree deteriorated. Although not surprising in itself, we would be prudent to remember the consequences should it begin to happen again.

The American performance in the early part of the Korean War was not bright, but "the retreat to the Naktong River in the summer of 1950 was less a display of faulty tactical conceptions than of faulty execution by troops who were too lightly trained, too loosely disciplined, and too lacking in motivation to match the determination of the enemy."⁷ Russell Weigley goes on to say: "In light of the American performance on the early Korean battlefields, lack of toughness and stamina in prisons should not have been surprising. Soldiers unprepared for battle, as the first to reach Korea were, naturally were also unprepared for the rigors of prison camps."⁸

The controversial question of General Dean's having remained in the town of Taejon, as it fell, is often not clearly understood by those who criticize his decision to remain exposed so far forward. The state of discipline and lack of toughness meant to General Dean, and many other top field commanders of the day, that on-the-spot leadership was the only way to get the troops to fight. The extent

to which the Army's discipline had sunk was exemplified by the lengths to which General Dean felt he must go. But the picture may be best described by T. R. Fehrenbach when commenting on the issue:

The US Army understandably has been reluctant to discuss the problem even among its own. Once it had returned to the bosom of a permissive society and tried to adopt that society's ways, its own hands were tied. Once it had gone on the defensive to its critics, it would never regain the initiative. When the answer to a problem is not immediately at hand, the better part of valor is to ignore it.⁹

Remobilization and the need to call back those who had already served their country in World War II because of the skills they possessed, while others escaped without seeing either war, quickly created criticism and hard feeling. The reserve structure had slipped away from having been a ready force in an emergency. It was not prepared to quickly fill the ranks of an Army at war. Commenting on the plight of the reserve establishment, Arthur Roth in an article for Military Affairs wrote:

The Armed Services were subjected to a great deal of criticism in their disposition of the reserves in the Korean War and if such mistakes are to be avoided in the future it seems evident that the Reserve must be kept strong by a regulated input of trained personnel of proper age groups who will not be subject to deferment upon call to active duty.¹⁰

The point is as applicable today as it was in 1950.

The comforts of home on the battlefield may be an American syndrome of long-standing. In Vietnam it reached momentous proportions but it is interesting to note that it occurred similarly in Korea. Perhaps it is the natural bedfellow of an unpopular limited

war. Yet what is the cost of affluence in lives lost? This question may never lend itself to an accurate answer but it is surely worthy of consideration. Some estimates have held that after the Chinese intervention in Korea the ratio of Communist to United Nations men in uniform was six to five but that the Communist superiority in fighting men was at least five to one. The obvious superiority in firepower of United Nations forces to that of the Communists prevents our making a specific judgment concerning the size of the support establishment. Nevertheless it was then and is now an issue of significance and must not be taken for granted because we are "after all, the product of an affluent, permissive society."

"Soldiers fight from discipline and training, citizens from motivations and ideals. Lacking both it is amazing that the American troops did even as well as they did."¹¹ Time, leadership, and experience eventually toughened the Army in Korea, but the process took its toll in lives and limbs. The legacy inherited there was one that had been developed in five short years by the decisions that had governed our wind-down to peace and subsequent wind-up for war. The message seems clear.



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CHAPTER VI

FOOTNOTES

1. Mark Ethridge and C. E. Black, "Negotiating on the Balkans," Negotiating With the Russians, Raymond Dermett and Joseph E. Johnson, eds. (1951), p. 181.
2. The Journal of American History, p. 571.
3. Weigley, pp. 500-501.
4. Report of the Secretary of War's Board on Officer-Enlisted Man Relationships (May 1946).
5. Millis, p. 330.
6. Weigley, p. 516.
7. Ibid., pp. 519-520.
8. Ibid., p. 520.
9. T. R. Fehrenbach, This Kind of War (1963).
10. Arthur Roth, "Development of the Army Reserve Forces," Military Affairs (Spring 1953), p. 7.
11. Fehrenbach.

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